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Never rely on Online Information for Self Medication through Medicinal Plants

- Posted by [Pankaj Oudhia](#) on July 16, 2012 at 8:29
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Excerpts from my Jungle Diaries (April 2012 onwards) Part-12

(In continuation of Part-11)

“This is your special gift I was talking about. It is wild tuber and you can consume it right now for its miraculous effects within hour. But if you have another plan then you can keep it for future use.” I was at Marriage ceremony of my friend Ajay.

For special wedding gift I visited to forest and after day long search collected wild tuber for him.

“No, I am consuming it right now as I can not wait longer to experience its miraculous effects.” Ajay was in hurry.

The ceremony was going on and we laughed on his eagerness to experience the performance of tuber with well known Aphrodisiac properties.



(Patalkumhda Tubers -Picture by Pankaj Oudhia)

“But you have told about the herbal oil for external application. Where is the oil?” Ajay complained.

“It was for the patient with poor sexual wealth not for common people. Are you still interested in it?” I asked.

“No, in that case it is of no use for me. I am fit sexually.” He replied defensively.

“Then there is no need for wild tuber also.” I joked. Ajay refused to return it back to me.

Ajay is cardiologist and during his studies in Europe he met Yogita and very soon they decided to marry.

“Yogita, he is Pankaj. My best friend.” Ajay introduced to Yogita.

“Pankaj you mean Pankaj Oudhia. I know you through your on-line writings. In fact I mentioned your work in my Ph.D. thesis on *Acorus calamus*.” Yogita said with joy.

I was informed that she is expert in European herbal remedies. I was fortunate to attend the marriage ceremony and to meet the unique match made in the heaven.

After the ceremony they returned back to Europe and initially through phone later by email we remained in contact but as the time passed we engaged in our professional works.

Four years after the last meeting I was delivering guest lecture at Mumbai among the young university researchers. I was surprised to see Yogita in the audience.

“Our relationship is at the end phase Ajay is still in Europe and I am here in Mumbai for my research on Indian herbs. I am working of Traditional Birth Attendants and Traditional Medicinal Knowledge about medicinal herbs they have.” Yogita informed in dull voice.

“What is the reason for this separation?” This question was in mind but kept it back with hesitation.

“Pankaj whenever you get time please inform me. I wish to visit Chhattisgarh to meet Traditional Birth Attendants. You have already written a lot about them.” Yogita said.

“Sure, I will inform you soon.” I assured.

While returning back from airport I made call to Ajay but again out of hesitation failed to ask about the reason for separation. Ajay shared nothing on the relationship. Even not mentioned the name of Yogita in long interaction.

In January I called to Yogita and invited her to Chhattisgarh.

“Yogita, we will travel to different directions every day and interact with Traditional Healers, Herb Collectors, Herb Traders and also Traditional Birth Attendants. Today our first destination is Herb Grower on nearby city.” I explained the plan to her. She showed much interest in it.

We visited to meet the farmer growing Munga (*Moringa oleifera*) commercially.



(Munga or Moringa- Picture by Pankaj Oudhia)

“Oh it is Drumstick Tree but why it is so short.” Yogita recognized the species and started questioning about it.

“This is not conventional type. It is small sized Munga raised in close spacing for market. The Traditional Healers don’t prefer it. They use Munga Tree in their Formulations.” I said.

There was severe insect infestation. Farmer asked me for promising chemical pesticides.

” You can visit to Agricultural University for chemical pesticides but if you are interested in management of pest through Vedic Knowledge I can extend my help. My technique will not only save your expenses but also it will not make the produce toxic.” I proposed.

“We are least concerned about the toxicity factor as we don’t consume it. We want to manage pest by any mean and if your technology is effective and at the same time less expensive then there is nothing wrong in trying it.” The farmer gave his consent. Listening our interactions the driver brought herbal mixture from car and started informing about its method of use.

In crop fields near to the forest I generally suggest the farmers to go to forest and collect useful plants. Once this information reaches to farmer’s in built hard disk i.e. his brain it remains as such up to generations. I also motivate them to grow the wild Trees in periphery of farm so that it can used time to time. In places far from forest I inform about forest trees and encourage the farmers to visit to far forest for collection. But in most of the cases farmers take less interest. For them I have prepared herbal mixtures.

“What is the cost of this mixture, sir?” The farmers ask this question.

“The farmers living in forest areas have prepared it for the fellow farmers free of cost. If you are interested in paying them back I am suggesting some herbal mixtures based on flora available around you but not available in far forest. Prepare it and give it to the farmers at forest.” I reply and farmers accept this innovative approach with happiness.

“Moringa is very useful medicinal species. I regularly take decoction of its bark for general health. During pregnancy it is boon.” When Yogita shared this information it was not reached to my mind correctly. Later I realized that it has reached but the information was not matching with the information present in my brain. At that time I ignored it and we moved further.

After long tiring journey we reached to Southern Chhattisgarh. The roadside weekly village market attracted the attention of Yogita and we stopped. It was amazing experience for Yogita and also for me. Yogita was seeing this market for the first time and I have visited hundreds of times but still every new visit feels like first visit to me. I took interest in Traditional Grains whereas Yogita moved to the country liquor corner. When I completed my photography and interaction I found Yogita sitting with tribal women and enjoying Landa prepared from fermented rice.



(Landa at weekly village market of Bastar- Picture by Pankaj Oudhia)



(That's how Landa is served- Picture by Pankaj Oudhia)

In remaining part of journey I remained quiet as expected and listened non-ending noisy lecture of Yogita. Landa inside her was showing its power. She disclosed every thing about her past and present. Also about his relationship with Ajay and finally about the possible reason for divorce. She has two miscarriages and after failure of all types of treatments bitterness merged in the relationship and they decided to live separately.

Next morning while sitting in forest floor with Coffee I interacted with Yogita.

“There are so many Traditional Healers in this region. If you wish, we can interact to them for this trouble and I am hopeful that you can get rid of this problem.” I said humbly.

Last night I talked to Ajay on this issue and at the end of interaction I found vigor in his voice. He was much hopeful. Back to Yogita. After initial discussion she got ready to meet the Healers.

After examine her, Healers decided to carry on some test. She was asked to urinate on wild Cucurbitaceae climbers, on some forest seeds and also on some insects.

“It may take two days for drawing any conclusion.” The Healers said. We returned back and continued the work.

“She is OK rather perfect in her health. There is no reason for said miscarriage.” The Healers gave this good news but they were still searching the cause. They decided to ask questions once more. During this on-going question answer session I decided to interact with the local farmers present there for treatment. We interacted about Moringa once more. Listening our interaction Yogita repeated her remark on Moringa again i.e. Moringa is very useful medicinal species. I regularly take decoction of its bark for general health. During pregnancy it is boon.

The Healers suddenly stopped the session and after silence of few minutes their face became very tense but when opened their mouth we heard soft voice “We use Moringa bark with Gud (Jaggery) for abortion. It is very effective and in use since time immemorial.”

We were shocked.

Yogita was taking the abortion inducing medicine during pregnancy considering it beneficial medicine.

“But I cannot believe in it. I have read much online literature claiming that Moringa bark is boon for health. I can show it to you. And bark looks full of therapeutic values not as toxic substance.” She said and started crying out of frustration by seeing in the eyes of confident Healers.

I always discourage self medication. Internet has given us the plethora of knowledge and given us freedom to access every kind of information but information shared by experts is always safe specially when your health is concerned.

India has given a lot in terms of Herbal Healing to the world community but today the health of common Indians is in great danger. Through television to mobile by using all types of media so called Medicine Experts are suggesting herbal remedies and due to generations old faith common people are taking it sincerely. This quackery is not providing help to them but generating never ending queue of new patients with new diseases due to wrong use of herbal remedies. This must be discouraged well in time.

“As you have taken Moringa in large quantity for purification of your body. Take it sincerely and we are eager to get good news from you.” The Healers assured her.

As expected within one year I received two good news. One was about reunion of Ajay and Yogita and another was about newborn.

I started again to the Healers with good news.

(Contd.)

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